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SUBJECT: SYG SELECTION: UNSC PRESIDENT MAYORAL UPDATES ON  
BILATERAL CONSULTATIONS, MARCH 22

REF: USUN 379

Classified By: Ambassador John R. Bolton, Permanent Representative, for  
Reasons 1.4 b,d

¶1. (SBU) Ambassador Bolton met on March 22 with Argentine Permanent Representative Cesar Mayoral, who was Security Council President for the month, to discuss the selection process for the next Secretary-General. Mayoral has continued the initiative started by Ambassador Bolton of bilateral consultations with Security Council members. He also intends to brief the full Council before leaving the Presidency, in informal consultations, on the results of his discussions.

¶2. (SBU) Mayoral said that his consultations had identified two main issues for the Council to resolve. The first remained the question of regional rotation and whether or not an Asian has a "right" to be the next SYG. Mayoral said that delegations had noted the key role China would play in this regard, including in determining how broadly "Asia" would be defined (i.e., just East Asia, or to include South and Southwest Asia?). Mayoral said the other big question was on timing, where other delegations seemed comfortable with a "step-by-step" approach that led to a decision in September.

¶3. (C) Ambassador Bolton said that discussions of rotation and timing "in the abstract" would continue to be difficult and would not likely result in consensus. Delegations' real positions on rotation would only be fleshed out once the Council discussed specific candidates. The Chinese might find that a Norwegian candidate "looks pretty good," Ambassador Bolton speculated, if Japanese PM Koizumi put himself forward as a candidate now that Tokyo's drive for a permanent Council seat has stalled. (Note: Mayoral expressed concern, though clearly in the realm of the hypothetical, that Japan or India might seek to link the SYG selection to the enlargement question and "trade one for the other." End Note.)

¶4. (SBU) On timing, Ambassador Bolton stressed the importance of avoiding a last-minute transition that did not provide the incoming SYG the necessary time to prepare for his or her new job. While we might agree that September is a good end date, it is impossible to guarantee, as we do not know how long the process will take. The more difficult question for the Council to address is when to start discussing names. The Council will also have to determine how to identify the list of candidates. The U.S., Ambassador Bolton said, wants to ensure that the widest possible field of candidates is considered, to ensure that the organization has the benefit of the largest pool of talent. We need to retain the option of having the Council approach an individual who might not have made him- or herself publicly known as a candidate.

¶5. (SBU) Mayoral said that Argentina had long supported a more transparent process of SYG selection and asked for U.S.

views regarding the General Assembly's role in the process. Ambassador Bolton noted that candidates, including some that are not publicly declared, are already making the rounds in New York to speak to delegations. This is a "good thing and inevitable." The problem will come, however, if the GA sets up formal "hearings or vetting procedures" that will serve to discourage potential candidates from coming forward.

BOLTON